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The Japanese Beetle

Popillia Japonica Newm.

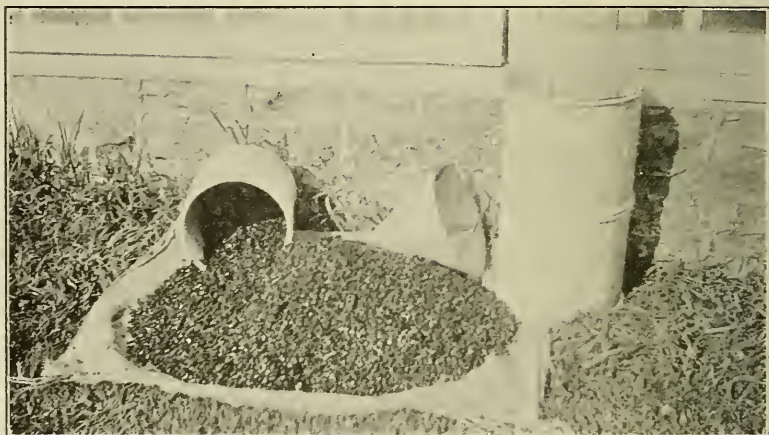
This new and dangerous pest was introduced twelve years ago in the vicinity of Philadelphia and has spread rapidly throughout the eastern parts of Pennsylvania, all of New Jersey and southern New York, including the western half of Long Island and Connecticut and has been reported recently from the vicinity of Springfield, Massachusetts.

It breeds so rapidly and feeds on such a variety of plants that it is recognized as a dangerous enemy, so that a special commission has been appointed to study its habits, food and natural enemies and to establish a quarantine and inspection system in order to try to check its damage. It is admitted that it will be impossible to destroy them entirely or to keep them from spreading, but they may be controlled by spraying, trapping and by their natural enemies both native and introduced.

The beetle is about half an inch in length with a brilliant green head and body and bronze-colored striped wings with tufts of white hairs on the segments of the abdomen. It feeds in the daytime, preferably in warm sunny weather and nibbles the leaves usually on the upper side. They attack the willows and poplars, elms and lindens, and show a preference for the sassafras and horse-chestnut. They also prefer any species of Asiatic origin such as barberries, knot-weed, rose-of-sharon, cherries, peaches and plums. The fruit-bearing trees and vines are often completely stripped of leaves and fruit and ornamental plants such as roses, hollyhocks, dahlias, cannas etc. attract them by their showy flowers. Certain vegetables also, such as cabbages and corn and a few berries, raspberries and blackberries, attract them, so the quarantine demands the examination of all such shipments from infected areas.

In certain portions of Pennsylvania and New Jersey as many as sixty bushels have been caught in traps in one day. They are boiled and fed to the chickens or used as manure.

They have a disagreeable odor and a dark oil, which is unpleasant unless they are cooked. Spraying with arsenate of lead will help to check them or drive them away, and some of our common birds, such as the purple grackle or crow-black bird and the starling are their worst enemies, also the kingbird, catbird and brown thrasher and thrush will eat them. Toads also are valuable as they catch them before they can do any damage or lay any eggs. Moles and skunks also feed on the grubs.



60 bushels caught in one day in August in one orchard.

The eggs are laid in the ground during the mating or breeding season, which lasts from the middle of June until the middle of October, and the grubs, like those of the June beetle, feed on the roots of grasses and other plants, doing a great deal of damage to lawns and golf greens. Poisoning of the soil with carbon-disulfide is often done to prevent this.

All the students of the high schools in New York City and adjacent territory may help in this crusade if they will, by catching and killing the beetles. Search while the sun shines, preferably in the early afternoon, drop them into a cup of kerosene and give them to your friends as specimens, so as to teach others to recognize them.

The Japanese Beetle Laboratory at Moorestown, New Jersey has issued a card for distribution showing the beetle enlarged and colored, and circulars of information may be had on application to the Department of Agriculture of the State of New Jersey at Trenton which will supply copies on request.

ELIZABETH G. BRITTON.

NEW YORK BOTANICAL GARDEN.

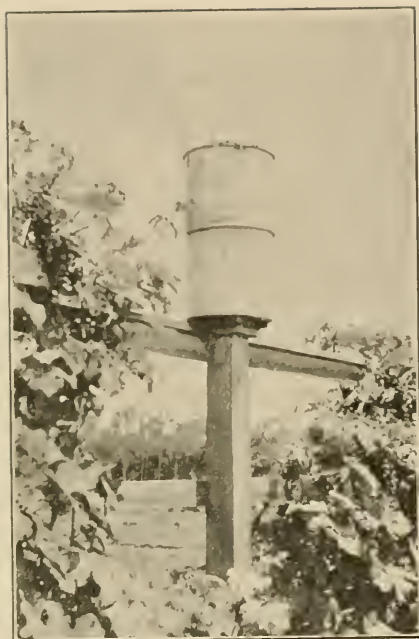


Fig. 1. Trap for Japanese beetles used at Jenkintown, Pa.



Fig. 2. A wheelbarrow full of beetles.

"Cuts by courtesy of the Florists Exchange and Horticultural Trade World."